THE ARCHITECT

Episode 1: "Blueprint"

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WGA Registration Pending

TEASER

EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

Light rain. Empty streets. Police car lights paint warehouse walls in blue and red.

Yellow crime scene tape stretches post to post. Twenty investigators and forensic photographers move inside it.

From the outside -- nothing.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The only light comes from investigator flashlights. In the center -- a CHAIR. On it sits a man in his sixties, elegant suit, hands resting on his knees. As if sitting by choice.

But he's dead.

No blood. No bruising. No sign of violence.

DETECTIVE HARRIS (50s, heavyset, exhausted) stands before the body, scratching his head.

HARRIS
(to forensic tech)
How'd he die?

FORENSIC TECH
We don't know yet. No obvious cause.

HARRIS
(frustrated)
A man in a thousand-dollar suit, sitting in an abandoned warehouse... died quietly?

Silence.

Then -- the sound of heels on concrete. Steady. Certain.

Everyone turns.

MAYA CROSS (35, slender, eyes that read everything) enters -- dark coat, hair pulled back, no makeup. She walks directly toward the body without looking at anyone.

HARRIS
Cross. Finally.

Maya doesn't respond. She crouches before the body. Pulls out latex gloves. Puts them on slowly.

She begins examining -- the face, neck, hands, fingers.

Her eyes stop.

MAYA
(quietly, as if to herself)
His fingers... look at the fingers.

Harris approaches. Looks. Sees nothing.

HARRIS
What about them?

MAYA
The nails are immaculate. Recently manicured. A man his age doesn't do that unless--

She stands.

Unless he knew he was going to die tonight. And wanted to look presentable.

Silence in the warehouse.

HARRIS
You're saying he came willingly?

MAYA
(circling the chair slowly)
The chair is in the geometric center of the warehouse. Precisely. Whoever placed it here took their time.

She looks at the floor.

His footprints come from the north entrance -- a straight line. No hesitation. No stops.

She turns to Harris.

He chose this location. He came alone. He sat down and waited.

HARRIS
Waited for what exactly?

Maya doesn't answer. Her gaze moves to the wall behind the chair.

Something small. Nearly invisible.

She approaches. Pulls out a small flashlight. Shines it.

On the wall -- in delicate pencil:

"MAYA."

Just that.

Maya stares at her name on the wall. Her face doesn't change -- but something behind her eyes shifts.

HARRIS
(from behind her)
Cross? What is that?

Maya turns off her flashlight.

MAYA
(perfectly calm)
The beginning.

SMASH CUT TO:

THE ARCHITECT

ACT ONE

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY

Open office. Twenty investigators. Phones and printers. Everyone moving.

Maya sits alone in the corner. Her desk is unlike anyone else's -- no family photos, no coffee mugs, no clutter. Only meticulously ordered files and a wall covered in red strings connecting photos and papers.

She stares at the wall. Her eyes move rapidly -- as if her brain operates at a different frequency than other humans.

AGENT COLE (28, new, enthusiastic beyond reason) approaches cautiously. Places a coffee cup on her desk.

COLE
Good morning. I got you--

MAYA
(without turning)
I don't drink coffee.

COLE
(embarrassed)
Sorry, I didn't know--

MAYA
Everyone in this office knows that. You've been here three weeks and haven't noticed.

Cole takes the cup and retreats in silence.

Harris enters from the hallway, file in hand, expression saying things have gotten complicated.

HARRIS
Cross. Director's office. Now.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Spacious office. DIRECTOR WALSH (60s, white hair, a politician's gaze rather than an investigator's) stands at the window, back to Maya.

Maya enters. Sits without being asked.

WALSH
(without turning)
The man you found last night. Do you know him?

MAYA
The name in the file -- Richard Cole, 64, professor of behavioral psychology. Georgetown University.

Beat.

Yes. I know him.

Walsh finally turns.

WALSH
How?

MAYA
He taught me in my first year of college. He was the first person to tell me I had "an exceptional mind." He's the one who encouraged me to join the FBI.

Beat.

He shaped my career.

Heavy silence.

WALSH
And you believe writing your name on the wall--

MAYA
Isn't a threat. It's a message. The difference is significant.

WALSH
(sits)

The case is yours. But Cole will be with you.

MAYA
I don't need--

WALSH
That's not a question, Cross.

Maya looks at him for a moment. Then stands.

MAYA
One thing.

WALSH
What?

MAYA
The new agent -- Cole -- did you personally assign him to this case?

WALSH
(pauses a beat)
The department assigned him. Standard random rotation. Why?

Maya looks at him with eyes that reveal nothing.

MAYA
Nothing.

She exits.

Walsh remains alone. Looks out the window.

He takes out his phone. Types a short text:

"IT HAS BEGUN."

He puts the phone down. His face doesn't change.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - ARCHIVE ROOM - LATER

Underground room. Endless shelves of files. Cold fluorescent light.

Maya moves between the shelves. Cole behind her trying to keep up.

COLE
I still don't understand -- if he was your professor, how can you investigate his case? Isn't there a conflict of interest?

MAYA
(without stopping)
Conflict of interest occurs when a personal relationship affects professional judgment. I don't have personal relationships.

COLE
He was your professor--

MAYA
He was a tool in my career. Like any other tool -- when it breaks, you need to understand why.

Cole stops. Looks at her.

COLE
(quietly)
That's... a strange way to see people.

Maya stops in front of a specific shelf. Pulls a old file without hesitation -- as if she knows exactly where it is.

MAYA
(opens the file)
Richard Cole. 1987. Asked to cooperate with FBI on a classified behavioral file.

She reads rapidly.

File sealed. High security classification.

COLE
How did you know exactly where the file was?

Maya looks at the file. Then at the shelf. Then at Cole.

MAYA

(strangely quiet)
I don't know.

For the first time -- something resembling unease appears in Maya's eyes.

She closes the file.

ACT TWO

INT. GEORGE TOWN UNIVERSITY - PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT - DAY

Long hallway. Faculty portraits on the wall. Maya and Cole walk quickly.

Maya stops suddenly before a photo.

Richard Cole -- formal portrait, quiet smile, intelligent eyes.

She stares at it for a second.

COLE
What are you thinking?

MAYA
(continues walking)
Nothing.

INT. GEORGE TOWN UNIVERSITY - COLE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The professor's office. Conspicuously neat -- every book in its place, every paper perfectly folded.

Maya enters. Begins scanning with her eyes without touching anything.

Cole opens drawers.

COLE
(pulling files)
Students, research, correspondence--

MAYA
The books.

COLE
What?

MAYA
Look at the books. The arrangement.

Cole looks. Normal bookshelves.

COLE
Alphabetical?

MAYA
No. Chronological -- by publication date.
But one doesn't fit.

She walks directly to a specific shelf. Pulls a thick volume:

"The Architecture of Mind" -- Dr. R. Cole, 1995

She opens it.

Inside -- not a book. A hidden box.

Inside: a collection of old photographs.

Maya takes them slowly. Looks.

First photo -- young Richard Cole shaking hands with another man whose face isn't visible.

Second photo -- same location, same unknown man -- but in the background...

A small girl. Black hair. Wide eyes.

Maya brings the photo closer to her face.

The girl -- resembles her.

COLE
(from behind her)
What did you find?

Maya doesn't respond.

Her hand grips the photo tightly.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - LAB - LATER

The forensic lab. White light. Analysis equipment.

Maya places the photo before DR. KIM (40s, forensic analyst, precise and quiet).

MAYA
I need this photo dated. And the girl in the background -- compare her to photos I'm sending you now.

She sends a childhood photo from her phone.

Kim looks at both photos on the screen.

DR. KIM
(after a moment)
Maya... this girl--

MAYA
I know. How long do you need?

DR. KIM
An hour.

MAYA
You have twenty minutes.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Maya exits the lab. Cole waits for her.

COLE
We found something. A second crime.

Maya stops.

COLE
(hands her his phone)
Came in ten minutes ago. Same method. Same signature.

Maya looks at the photo on the phone.

The victim -- a man in his sixties. Sitting in a chair. Elegant suit. No sign of violence.

His face -- Maya recognizes it.

MAYA
(quietly)
When?

COLE
They estimate between 2 and 4 AM. He was--

MAYA
Jack Morris. Former FBI agent. Supervised my first year of training at Quantico.

Cole looks at her.

COLE
How did you--

MAYA
(walking)
Because everyone who shaped my career is dying in order.

EXT. CRIME SCENE - ABANDONED HOTEL - NIGHT

Old hotel on the city outskirts. Same setup -- crime tape, police cars, light rain.

Maya enters directly.

INT. ABANDONED HOTEL - ROOM 114 - CONTINUOUS

Old hotel room. Peeling wallpaper. But in the center -- the same scene with chilling precision.

Chair. Man. Suit.

Maya examines the body quickly. Lifts the victim's head gently.

Jack Morris. Eyes closed. Peaceful expression.

Maya looks at the wall.

This time -- a small note pinned with a pushpin.

She opens it.

"Do you remember?"

COLE
(reading over her shoulder)
Remember what?

Maya folds the note. Places it in an evidence bag.

MAYA
That's what I'm trying to find out.

She turns to leave -- and stops.

On the side table -- a coffee cup. Still emitting faint steam.

Maya stares at it.

MAYA
(without turning)
Cole. When did you arrive?

COLE
About twenty minutes ago. Why?

Maya looks at the cup.

MAYA
The coffee is still warm.

Silence.

COLE
Meaning--

MAYA
Meaning he was here. Twenty minutes ago.
Watching us arrive.

Cole looks at the window quickly.

The street below -- empty.

Or appears empty.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - LAB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Maya returns to the lab. Kim waits for her. Her face is strange -- a mix of confusion and concern.

DR. KIM
The comparison results are ready.

MAYA
What did you find?

Kim turns the screen.

Two photos side by side -- the girl in Cole's old photo, and Maya's childhood photo.

Match percentage: 94.7%

DR. KIM
Maya... that's you.

Maya stares at the screen.

She doesn't move.

DR. KIM
(carefully)
The photo was taken in 1994. You would have been--

MAYA
Six years old.

Beat.

My father died when I was an infant. I was two years old.

DR. KIM
Maya--

MAYA
(terrifyingly calm)
Then who took this photograph?

Silence in the lab.

Maya's phone rings.

Unknown number.

She looks at it.

Answers.

MAYA
Who is this?

Silence from the other end. Then -- a man's voice. Deep. Calm. As if smiling.

VOICE (O.S.)
Wrong question, Maya.

Beat.

The right question is -- who are you?

The line goes dead.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. MAYA'S APARTMENT - 2:00 AM

Maya sits on the floor. Around her -- all the case papers. Victim photos. Both notes. Her childhood photo.

She tries to organize everything. Strings connecting photos.

She stops at a photo of her father -- single, old, faded. A young man holding an infant.

She picks it up. Stares at his face.

For the first time -- she realizes she's never looked at this photo through an investigator's eyes.

She enlarges it with her phone.

The background -- a government building. A faint emblem on the wall.

She enlarges further.

The emblem -- FBI BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE UNIT.

Her "dead" father was in an FBI building.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - ARCHIVE ROOM - 3:30 AM

Maya enters alone. The place is empty at this hour.

She goes directly to the classified files section.

She searches. Searches. Searches.

Then finds -- a thin file. Its name:

"PROJECT MAYA -- CLASSIFIED -- DIRECTOR EYES ONLY"

Her hands stop.

She opens it slowly.

First page -- date: March 15, 1988.

Her birthday.

She reads:

"The project aims to test the possibility of shaping an exceptional forensic mind from birth through a controlled environment and directed stimuli. Candidate: female. Father: volunteer agent. Mother: unaware of the project."

Maya stops reading.

She looks at the ceiling.

Takes a deep breath.

Continues:

"Project supervisor: Dr. Richard Cole. Funded by: Behavioral Research Unit. Ultimate goal: produce an investigator capable of analyzing the most complex criminal minds in history."

Last line on the page:

"Note: Father requested termination of participation in 1990. Request denied."

Maya closes the file.

She sits on the floor.

For the first time in her life -- she doesn't know what to think.

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - ARCHIVE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sound of footsteps.

Cole enters. Sees her on the floor. Approaches slowly.

COLE
Found you on the camera. Maya, it's three thirty--

He sees the file in her hand.

He stops.

COLE
What is that?

MAYA
(terrifyingly calm)
How old are you?

COLE
(confused)
Twenty-eight. Why?

MAYA
Your full name.

COLE
Maya, what--

MAYA
Your full name.

COLE
(hesitating)
...Jackson Richard Cole.

Silence.

Maya looks at him.

MAYA
Richard. Like my professor.

COLE
(swallows)
Coincidence--

MAYA
I don't believe in coincidence. You know that.

Cole doesn't respond.

Maya stands slowly.

MAYA
Who sent you?

COLE
(steps back)

Maya, you're exhausted, you need to--

MAYA
(sharp)
Who. Sent. You.

Cole looks at her. Something changes in his eyes -- the mask slips slightly.

COLE
(quietly)
He said you'd reach this question quickly.
He was right.

Maya doesn't move.

MAYA
Who is he?

COLE
(smiles gently -- a sad smile)
Your father.

EXT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - PARKING LOT - 4:00 AM

Maya exits alone. Cold air. Empty street.

She stands. Takes a breath.

Her phone rings.

Same unknown number.

She answers. Says nothing.

VOICE (O.S.)
You found the file.

MAYA
(quietly)
You're alive.

VOICE (O.S.)
I was always alive.

MAYA
Why?

Long silence.

VOICE (O.S.)
Because the world is full of minds no one understands. Minds that kill, destroy, manipulate -- and no one can stop them.

Beat.

I built someone who could.

MAYA
You built a human being. Not a tool.

VOICE (O.S.)
(with genuine tenderness)
I know. That was my only mistake.

Beat.

And I'm sorry.

Maya stares at the horizon.

MAYA
Where are you?

VOICE (O.S.)
Close. I was always close.

Beat.

But the time wasn't right -- until now.

MAYA
Why now?

VOICE (O.S.)
Because the man who designed the project with me -- has begun using what we learned. In ways I never agreed to.

Beat.

And the only person capable of stopping him--

MAYA

(completes his sentence)
Is me.

Silence.

VOICE (O.S.)
Lesson one is complete, Maya.

Beat.

You are ready.

The line goes dead.

Maya looks at her phone.

Then at the sky.

Rain begins.

INT. MAYA'S APARTMENT - 5:00 AM

Maya enters. Turns on the light.

She freezes.

On her table -- a third note.

She approaches. Opens it.

In elegant, confident handwriting:

"Lesson 2: The enemy is not who you think. Look at those you trust."

Maya raises her eyes.

She looks at the mirror before her.

In the mirror's reflection -- behind her -- the door is open.

It was locked.

And in the corner chair -- her coat.

A coat she didn't leave there.

Maya doesn't turn around.

She speaks to the mirror:

MAYA
How long have you been here?

Silence.

Then -- a voice. From the corner. Deep. Calm. The same voice from the phone. But this time -- real. In the same room.

VOICE
Since you arrived.

Maya closes her eyes for one second.

Opens them.

Turns slowly.

A man in his seventies. White hair. Calm eyes. Sitting in the chair as if it's his home.

His face -- an older version of her own face.

No doubt.

Maya looks at him.

He looks at her.

The first time he's seen her in twenty-three years.

In his eyes -- something resembling pride. And something resembling grief.

FATHER
(quietly)
Hello, Maya.

Maya doesn't move.

Doesn't speak.

She simply looks at him -- with investigator's eyes reading every detail.

Then:

MAYA
I have questions.

FATHER
(smiles gently)
I know. I have answers.

Beat.

But time is short.

He stands slowly.

The man using our work -- will commit his greatest crime before dawn.

Maya looks at him.

MAYA
Who is he?

The father looks at her directly.

FATHER
Your director.

Maya's expression doesn't change.

But behind her eyes -- everything changes.

She remembers -- Walsh. A text message. "IT HAS BEGUN."

MAYA
(perfectly calm)
How much time do we have?

FATHER
(checks his watch)
Forty minutes.

Maya takes her weapon from the drawer. Checks it.

Heads for the door.

Stops. Turns.

MAYA
Don't disappear.

The father looks at her.

FATHER
(quietly)
I won't disappear this time.

EXT. CITY STREETS - PRE-DAWN

Maya drives fast. Alone. Phone to her ear.

MAYA
Cole. Where is Walsh right now?

COLE (V.O.)
(surprised)
Maya? It's five--

MAYA
Where is he?

COLE (V.O.)
(checking)
...Last security badge log -- he entered the south building an hour ago. The building's supposed to be empty now.

MAYA
Who is in the south building right now?

COLE (V.O.)
(brief silence)
...A potential witness in another case. They brought her in for questioning tonight. Maya--

Maya presses the accelerator.

INT. FBI SOUTH BUILDING - INTERROGATION WING - DAWN

Empty hallway. Emergency lights only.

Maya enters with weapon drawn.

She walks silently. Listens.

A faint sound from a room at the end.

She approaches.

Forces the door open.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Walsh stands in the center.

Before him -- a WOMAN bound to the chair. Unconscious.

In Walsh's hand -- a syringe.

He turns to Maya. Doesn't seem surprised.

WALSH
(calmly)
I expected you at least an hour later.

MAYA
(weapon aimed)
Put down the syringe.

WALSH
(looking at the syringe)
Do you know what this is? The same compound we used in the project. It makes the mind... malleable. Cole proved it works. You proved it works.

MAYA
The project is over.

WALSH
(raises the syringe)
The project never ended. It only evolved. This woman -- an analyst at a rival agency. After this injection she'll work with us. Just like you.

MAYA
I didn't choose this.

WALSH
(smiles)
No one chooses who they are at the beginning, Maya. That's a lesson you learned well--

A gunshot.

The syringe flies from his hand.

Walsh stumbles back. Looks at his hand. Minor wound.

Looks at Maya.

Maya stares at him. The weapon doesn't waver.

MAYA
Lesson one I learned: a tool that breaks its programming... becomes dangerous.

Walsh slowly raises his hands.

INT. FBI SOUTH BUILDING - HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Agents fill the space. Walsh handcuffed. Being led away.

Cole stands beside Maya. They watch.

COLE
How did you know?

MAYA
A text message he sent to someone when the investigation started. One word -- "begun." But the investigation hadn't started yet at that point.

Beat.

Which means he knew before it began. Which means he arranged the beginning.

COLE
(quietly)
And your father?

Maya looks ahead.

MAYA
He'll answer my questions.

Beat.

All of them.

INT. MAYA'S APARTMENT - SUNRISE

Maya enters.

The corner chair -- empty.

She looks at it.

On the chair -- a note.

She takes it. Reads:

"The questions are many. The answers exist. But some truths change everything -- and you need to be ready.

When you are ready -- look inside the blue file. The last drawer. The one you've never opened."

Maya looks at the desk drawer.

A blue drawer. At the bottom.

She walks to it slowly.

Places her hand on the handle.

Stops.

Takes a breath.

Opens it.

Inside -- a thick blue file.

On the cover -- her name.

And beneath it -- one sentence in her father's handwriting:

"You are not the result. You are the reason."

Maya stares at the sentence.

She doesn't open the file.

She looks out the window. The sun rises.

Her face -- for the first time in this entire episode -- is unreadable.

For the first time -- even she doesn't know what she feels.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

THE ARCHITECT

END OF PILOT

In the darkness -- the father's voice:

FATHER (V.O.)
Lesson two hasn't begun yet.

FADE OUT.